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STRICTURES

ON A

PAMPHLET

SIGNED

THEOPHILUS:

EXPLAINING

The REAL CAUSES of the DISCONTENTS in EVERY PART of this KINGDOM, respecting

TITHES,

AND CONTAINING

REASONS why TITHES ought to be ABOLISHED ENTIRELY,

AND THE PRACTICABILITY OF SUBSTITUTING

A BETTER MODE OF SUBSISTENCE AND MAINTENANCE FOR THE CLERGY OF THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED,

CONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF REASON AND JUSTICE.

BY A FARMER.

"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth, in order, a
"Declaration of those Things which are now agitating the Minds of
"the People,
"It seemed good unto me, also, having had Understanding of these Things,
"to write to thee in order, most excellent THEOPHILUS."

St. LUKE.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE READER.

IT has been cuſtomary with thoſe who have written any thing deſigned to meet the eye of the Public, to ſay ſomething by way of introductory diſcourſe, which may let the Reader into part of the Author's deſign, as well as his views on obtruding his ſentiments on them. This is the caſe with the Author who has now the honour of laying his thoughts before them. Indeed the Pamphlet ſigned THEOPHILUS is of ſo dangerous and inflaming a tendency, it breathes ſo ſtrong and violent a party ſpirit, and endeavours ſo ſtrenuouſly to ſtimulate the Legiſlature of this country to exert its ſtrength in behalf of the Clergy, whom he repreſented as labouring under peculiar hardſhips; and traduces the characters of the tillage farmers,

mers, bitterly reproaching them, as being a principal cauſe of the preſent diſturbances, by withholding from the Clergy their juſt demands; that I could not reſiſt the impulſe of the moment from noting, as I went through his Pamphlet, the glaring injuſtice of his remarks on that reſpectable and moſt uſeful body of men in the State, the tillers of the earth. And having again conſidered and looked over what I had written in their vindication, I was in haſte to deliver theſe my ſentiments to an impartial and, I truſt, a liberal Public. Far removed myſelf from the capital, immerſed in farming matters, and eager to have it printed before the meeting of Parliament, that, ſhould it have the honour of meeting the attention of any of the Members of either the Lords or Commons Houſe, it may help a little to remove from their minds the bad effects that the injurious repreſentations of THEOPHILUS may have had on them. The writer is ſenſible how very inferior he is to THEOPHILUS in learning and abilities: can he claim any merit, it is in the courage, perhaps indeed raſhneſs, of attempting Strictures

on

on a work that has been repreſented as unanſwerable. Let the ſhortneſs of the time plead ſome excuſe alſo for the many imperfections of the work: for a few days only had I to do it all in, and it was impoſſible to follow THEOPHILUS through ſo long and dry a work, without feeling mental fatigue, and what was ſtill worſe, it of neceſſity increaſed this pamphlet of mine to a length that at firſt I was not aware of, or I ſhould never have undertaken it. The whole queſtion in reſpect of Tithes muſt ultimately be reſolved into theſe two: Will the Legiſlature uphold the claims of the Church, at all times jealous of her rights, and by ſo doing check for ever the riſing greatneſs of this country, by fettering the hands of its moſt induſtrious ſubjects? Or by compelling the Clergy to accept of a juſt Equivalent for Tithes, or eſtabliſhing a general Modus through the kingdom, make two millions of people happy? This ſhould be no party matter, for it is the cauſe of all. Now ſomething probably will be done: all are equally concerned in it: and expectation makes every heart anxious to know what the wiſdom of the Legiſlature

will

will decide on. That it may tend to the mutual Content of both Clergy and Laity, is the fervent wish of

JAN. 15, 1787.

THE AUTHOR.

STRICTURES

STRICTURES

ON A PAMPHLET SIGNED

THEOPHILUS.

Moſt excellent THEOPHILUS,

YOUR incomparable Pamphlet, the work of much ſtudy, labour, and *invention*, reached my hands a few days ago. I indeed lament that I had not the good fortune of ſeeing it ſooner, as want of time muſt neceſſarily render this work of mine, which I have the honour of addreſſing to you, leſs complete than I could wiſh; but your candour and moderation, eminently conſpicuous through your whole pamphlet, encourages me to hope (though not perſonally known to you) for your favour and protection; eſpecially as I ſpare no pains to have this printed by a *Proteſtant*; to make every thing as pleaſing to you as I can.

You daſh at once into the midſt of your foes (that is to ſay, the Farmers) fearleſs of all oppoſition, armed at all points—law on one ſide, and goſpel on the other—you ſtep forth, the doughty champion of the Church, ſhaking your terrific plumes. An unlettered Farmer, with truth for his auxiliary, attempts to ſtop the further progreſs of the learned and mighty THEOPHILUS! who, I doubt not, will think but little of ſuch puny adverſaries; one of whom he deſpiſes, and the other, bright as is the name, he treats but with a very moderate degree of reſpect.

You aſſert in your firſt and ſecond pages, that the White Boys, eighteen or twenty years ago, ſuggeſted ſeveral real or imaginary grievances, as the cauſe of their inſurrections; and that it was not the church alone at which their attacks were levelled, but that the oppreſſions of landlords was alſo a plea for their outrages. However, as their grievances were only redreſſed by the hangman, we ſhall turn away our eyes from the bloody page of their hiſtory.

You next aſſert, that the preſent mob, who "are all papiſts," aſſemble at Maſs-houſes (that is to ſay, Chapels) on Sundays for the purpoſe of eſtabliſhing a modus in lieu of Tithes; and *conſequently*, by fair deduction, to exterminate the whole Proteſtant Clergy, as by law eſtabliſhed; and that to this they bind themſelves by ſolemn oaths,

oaths, at the foot of the altar. What's more ſurprizing, the extent and depth of this miſchief was never even thought of, till the Lynx-eyed THEOPHILUS, pierced the dark clouds where this banditti had enveloped their nefarious deſigns; and by throwing a blaze of light on the ſubject, ſhewed the lurking fiend, who, under the maſk of dutiful and loyal addreſſes, and the ſpecious, though untrue, complaints of grievances, ſought to erect the gaudy banners of Popery on the ruins of our Church, with one hand, while with the other he was to pull down the pillars of the conſtitution; and ſo annihilate at once, not only the liberties of this devoted country, but of all Europe!

Danes and Swedes, and Dutch, Pruſſians and Ruſſians (only it would be ſtepping a little out of your way, or you might have hauled in America with great advantage) what a cruſh, what ruin, and how blind were the Proteſtants and Diſſenters of all kinds, and Lords and Commons, never to ſee or be aware, of the ſtupendous ruin that ſeemed ready to tumble on their heads; but your ſaving hand is ſtretched out, and all is well! What civic crowns may not you expect from your grateful countrymen when the ſenate meets? and what glorious rewards, even from the various Proteſtant powers of Europe? Medals will be ſtruck, and ſtatues erected, to perpetuate to poſ-

terity, the merits of the great THEOPHILUS, the preſerver of the liberties of Europe!

And when we conſider that this ſcheme was hatched in the ſouth of this poor iſland, by an unarmed ignorant peaſantry, urged on by a few Mendicant Friars and Popiſh Miſſionaries; we cannot but admire the ſagacity and wiſdom of THEOPHILUS, who, by a powerful exertion of his lungs, has in one warning-blaſt, againſt agitating Friars and invidious Miſſionaries, diſſipated their embryo ſchemes for ever.

You next aver, that all the complaints made by the Popiſh laity againſt the exactions of their *own* Clergy, was for no purpoſe but to throw ſilly Proteſtants off their guard. But, as you ſay, what have we to do with it, ſuppoſing it to be true, they and their clergy might go to the ——, ſo the Tithes are paid.

You divide your pamphlet into ſix general heads. One would think that pretty well. But to divide the firſt of theſe again into five more, my dear THEOPHILUS, had you no mercy, it was really putting human patience to the proof!

Your firſt is, you ſay, to waſh away the falſe colouring, that we may ſee things in a true light.

Secondly, you endeavour to ſhew, that by aboliſhing Tithes, the property of the Proteſtant Eccleſiaſtics would go to the Popiſh Eccleſiaſtics. Certainly, were this to

be

be the caſe, an alteration would not be much for the better.

Thirdly, that the abolition or reduction of Tithes, will increaſe inſtead of diminiſhing the burdens of real Landholders and Farmers.

But before I proceed any further, I ſhall conſider your firſt propoſition: the concluſions you draw from it taking up thirty-three pages of your book, no time is to be loſt.

That Tithes are the undoubted right of the Clergy, that they are well fenced in with law and goſpel, is admitted on all hands; that they are co-eval with the conſtitution, I believe, becauſe you ſay ſo; but be that as it will, provided they are not co-eternal with the conſtitution, I am perfectly eaſy as to their origin. No ſpecies of property is better ſecured, nor to which there is a clearer title; nor can any exaction take place on the ſide of the Clergy, for the tenth of the annual produce of the earth, when ſevered from it, is their due; and further than this they cannot exact. But as the receiving all this in kind, was attended with numberleſs inconveniences, eſpecially to the Clergy, who found it in many caſes difficult, and in ſome *impracticable*, as you ſay, to draw them away; that therefore the Clergyman and his Pariſhioner found it to be their *mutual* advantage, to agree upon a certain ſum of money to be annually paid, inſtead of receiving the

Tithe

Tithe in kind: yet in the ſame breath you ſay, that in all theſe agreements the *advantage* evidently lay on the ſide of the Farmer; how then was the advantage mutual? But if an advantage was to be, in the name of juſtice, at whoſe ſide ought it to lie? why, certainly at the ſide of the Farmer; who has the trouble and expence of reaping, ſtacking, thraſhing, and ſending it to market? And if he was to buy his Tithe too dear, that is, if he was not in hopes of making ſomething by it, why ſhould he buy it at all? tell me who would?

And by your own confeſſion, the Parſon cannot be aggrieved, becauſe he may draw it away. And if he finds this troubleſome or ineligible, who is to blame? Not the Farmer certainly. He muſt impeach then the wiſdom, though he cannot but revere the piety, of our anceſtors, who deviſed this beſt of all poſſible modes of providing for the maintenance and ſupport of the Clergy. But perhaps this would be too haſty a concluſion: as in thoſe early times, when this method was thought on, it was ſuppoſed, that one pariſh was enough for one parſon; and that conſequently, the tenth of all that grew in that pariſh, was enough for him to eat; and the tenth of the wool, enough to furniſh him with warm cloathing, and a little to ſpare. They did not foreſee, that in theſe modern days, one, two, three, four, or even five pariſhes, are

ſcarcely

ſcarcely ſufficient for one unconſcionable individual; who would ſwallow up as many more if he could get them, to the injury of many a worthy Clergyman, who would be happy to have even a part of one of theſe pariſhes for a proviſion for himſelf and large family.

Probably alſo it was deſigned that every Rector ſhould reſide in his pariſh, and ſo draw away the tenths into his ample barns. But things are much changed: were ſuch to be the caſe now, it would be a cruel extenſion and ſeverity in that tax (pardon the expreſſion), and however deſirous it would be to have a reſident Clergy, yet on theſe terms (that is to ſay, if they drew away the whole tenth) I'll venture to ſay it would be attended with the ruin of the whole people, and no price hardly could be paid too dear, to purchaſe their abſence.

It would reduce this kingdom to a waſte, as every Farmer would be obliged to abandon his plough, and ſeek an aſylum in ſome other country, whoſe government would have humanity and wiſdom enough to unmanacle the moſt uſeful hands in the ſtate, whoſe numbers conſtitute its real ſtrength, and whoſe toils alone ſupport in luxury, not only an indolent prieſthood, but every other order of men in the ſtate, who are fed by the ſweat of their brows.

You ſay alſo, that the backward ſtate of the Proteſtant Religion, and the very ſnails-

pace

pace that it creeps on at, in this kingdom, is owing to the *ſcanty pittances* which the Clergy receive in lieu of their rights; for that were the Tithes all paid as they ought to be, that then the Biſhops would diſſolve the unions; and pluralities (the bane of the church) would ceaſe. The making of converts is, I own, one of the moſt deſirable things in the world; and what every good man ought to ſet earneſtly about, laying aſide every other occupation, as not to be put in competition with ſo deſirable an object. But as this has been taken in hand by the divines of all religions that firmly believed in, and were at all anxious about the advancement of their faith, laymen have nothing more to do than to appropriate funds to maintain a number of Clergy ſufficient for this purpoſe. And were our Prelates and dignified Clergy anxious in reality about this, they might, by giving up even half of their large poſſeſſions,* have doubled the number of Clergy in the kingdom; and conſequently the number of Proteſtants would be now one million, inſtead of 500,000, the preſent number. But no price ſhould be thought too high to gain proſelytes; therefore I think that your idea is not enlarged enough when you ſay, that we ought to have 4000 Clergy, and that Tithes

* The revenues of the Archbiſhops and Biſhops amount to the ſum of 73,400l. a year.

Tithes of all, well paid, would provide for this number. I declare, when I conſider the force of your reaſoning, I am ſtruck with horror at our impiety; for I ſee 'tis all the fault of the laity, that no more converts have been made: and ſure we had better give, not only the tenth, but even the half of what we have, rather than ſuffer any more of the miſguided people to take the wrong road to heaven; if indeed they are going there at all: therefore I propoſe, that there be inſtantly 4000 Clergy added to the preſent number of parochial Clergy, in all 5000; for as to Biſhops we'll not ſpeak about them; then every man of the 4000 new raiſed levies would have exactly 500 papiſts to convert, the whole being 2,000,000, which they would do in a jerk; for you know you aſſert that there is nothing more wanting than a ſufficiency of Clergy for the purpoſe. Now theſe 4000 might be horſe and foot, in order to penetrate more ſpeedily into the remote parts of the country; you may obſerve that I purpoſely omit the preſent Clergy, as being found not very expert at this work; beſides theſe additional Parſons, not to be an everlaſting burden on us, ſhould be very liberally paid, while on this hard duty; which payments ſhould ceaſe the inſtant the converts were made, and that would be a wonderful ſpur to their activity, inſomuch that in two years all would be pro-

teſtants, to the great comfort of the true believers. I would alſo, to prevent confuſion and riot among theſe reverend gentry, as men's minds are never more inflamed than when employed in convert-making; I ſay, to prevent the confuſion that might ariſe from one pretending to have converted where another had converted before; I would have the Police that is to be eſtabliſhed for our ſafety all through the kingdom, employed in numbering the people, and claſſing them ſo as to form 500 in each diviſion, and having the name of the convertor of the diviſion, they muſt affix it on each of the 500 allotted to him, either by neatly ſtitching it on his back, or, as the peaſantry want clothes very much, by providing a livery for each man: or elſe by branding him, which I think the moſt certain method of knowing them again; then every Clergyman to be provided with a bugle-horn, and getting on an eminence on Sundays and holidays, ſound this well-known inſtrument, at which the whole herd will prick up their ears, and when met, he may harangue them after his own faſhion. The firſt who is happy enough to convert his 500, to be richly paid and highly honoured, his gown and caſſock to be hung up in St. Patrick's own Cathedral, and a grand Te Deum to be ſung by the Choir.

Now what do you think of this? A ſcheme complete in all its parts! that in the

the ſmall compaſs of two years would bring about that event ſo deſirable, and which, our great calculators have ſaid, at the rate things go on now, will be 4000 years in accompliſhing, if even finiſhed then; but here it is done at once: were I a parſon now, as I really am not, I ſhould expect (not unreaſonably) the firſt mitre that fell to be given to me; now I'll venture to ſay this plan is worthy of attention, and to which fewer objections can be made than even to your land ſcheme. I do aſſure you I plume myſelf much on it, and have received my own congratulations for its ingenuity and practicability over and over, and ſo I leave it for your conſideration.

You next ſay, that for fear people ſhould be miſled by the preſent clamours of exactions on the ſide of the clergy, you will mention *only one* ſpecies of predial tithe, and the rate of compoſition for it, that is potatoes. How candid this is. 'Tis juſt as if you came to the County of Kildare, and ſaid, I will juſt mention one tithe in that county, and that is wheat: but in the South it is ſtill worſe, for there the potatoes are the actual ſubſiſtence of the poor. The greateſt wretch that poverty ever marked for her own muſt have ſome of theſe, or ſtarve; and as you ſay grounds being overrun with vaſt herds of cattle, the great landlords let out tracts to the poor for potatoes, and it is the exactions for the tythe of

theſe which has raiſed the feeble murmur of diſcontent to ſwell into a loud and clamorous voice, that now grates the ears of the public, and has awakened the ſpirit of outrage, and ſtimulated it to acts of cruelty, and more than ſavage barbarity.

How much more honourable would it have been for the Houſe of Commons, who voted that man an enemy to his country who aſked or ſued for tithe of agiſtment, had they laid the interdiction on whoever ſued for tithe from the potatoe gardens, or few ſods of turf of theſe miſerables! But few are the protectors of the poor, and ſeldom has the arm of power been ſtretched out in their favour. I declare, I think the fat grazier ought to ſhare the burden: and if no better plan can be deviſed, a general modus ought to take place through the kingdom, and let it fall a little on people much better able to bear the burden. But if the paying the tithe of agiſtment, that is, if the tenth of the clear gains of the grazier did not go to relieve the land, already too heavy for the ſhoulders of the farmer, I would rather that it remained as it now is, partially as it is now circumſtanced; eſpecially as the clergy make a ſhift to live tolerably well on their *pittances*. You ſay that for the acre of ground ſo laid out for potatoes the landlord gets the enormous price of from ſix to eight pounds, and that the ſeed, planting, &c. coſts 4l. in all 12l.

and

and that the crop muſt be worth a great deal more; conſequently Mr. O'Driſcoll's allowance for tithe is infinitely too ſmall; for that the clergyman has an undoubted right to the tenth barrel of theſe, when dug out of the ground.

Let us ſtate the matter thus, ſuppoſing the crop a medium one, about 60 barrels, which is rather high:

	£.	s.
Rent one acre -	8	—
Seed and Labour -	4	—
	12	—
Digging out, and pitting, picking &c.	1	10
	13	10

	£.	s.
Produce 60 Barrels at 5s. -	15	—
	13	10
	1	10
Deduct for tithe 6 Barrels -	1	10
Profit -	—	—

It may happen, however, that the farmer may get the potatoes put in cheaper, and dug out cheaper; but all things taken in account, not much, perhaps 10s. or ſo. Now for the tithe of this, Mr. O'Driſcoll wants to eſtabliſh a commutation of ſix ſhillings per acre. You have before you the whole ſtatement, let your feelings decide

cide it. Now I will aſk any perſon of reaſon, on what is this poor wretch to ſubſiſt, and to feed a large family on, were the tenth of theſe taken from him. Nor is your concluſion juſt, that if he did not make more by his crop than the ſum he paid for it, he would not ſpend his time and labour on it; for the fact is otherwiſe; he muſt have the potatoes or ſtarve, and though often deceived, yet ſtill he lives in the expectation that the year may be favourable, and the earth yield an abundant increaſe; but large or ſmall, dear or cheap, he has no other reſource. I do not ſay that the clergy or their proctors are alone culpable, where all are in a general conſpiracy to oppreſs the poor; and if the landlords aſk 8l. for an acre of land from a miſerable wretch, all I ſay is, more ſhame for them. One thing that encourages the poor to give ſo much for the land is, that they go in debt for it, no money being paid till the crop is fit to dig out; a great temptation this, and hard to be reſiſted.

After all, I believe in common honeſty, the Clergy ought not to inſiſt on any Tithe for Potatoes; for if the ſame number of Clergy were thought to have been well provided for, by allotting a tenth of the corn, hay, &c. for their maintenance, it follows, that if our anceſtors foreſaw that potatoes would be in general uſe, they would either have exempted the potatoe-

garden

garden of the poor, or leſſened the value or quantity of the whole; ſo that inſtead of a tenth, it is probable that a twentieth would have been thought ſufficient for their ſupport. But ye have the letter of the law on your ſide—" a pound of fleſh " neareſt his heart."

You let no occaſion ſlip of vilifying the characters of the poor Farmers; you inſinuate that the Parſon has no right to meaſure the land, and that therefore he is obliged to take up with whatever the Farmer ſays it contains; and of conſequence that the Parſon never gets his due, owing to the knavery of the Farmer. I believe, indeed, the Farmer would ſtare to ſee Mr. Wiſeacre the Surveyor, with his circumferenter and chain, come to meaſure his potatoe-garden; but pray are the Proctors ever hindered from walking over the grounds to value the crops, and which of theſe are ſo ignorant as not to know how to ſtep out, as they call it, an acre of ground, potatoe ridges lying in right lines, and the whole garden being, without exception, almoſt either a ſquare or paralellogram, can be meaſured by the moſt ignorant almoſt to the greateſt degree of exactneſs. Reflect then on what you have ſaid!

You next give us the hiſtory of two ſuits in an Eccleſiaſtical Court, the moſt vexatious of all courts, and, were Tithes aboliſhed, the moſt unneceſſary on earth; thank

thank God their power is not very extenſive! and bleſſed be the *real wiſdom* of our forefathers, who put them under the feet of the common law courts; where chained till their utter abolition, may they ever remain! Does not Amen "ſtick in your throat?"

The two inſtances you bring, in both of which the Clergy were right, are, I dare ſay, very true. It would indeed have been ſurprizing, had you mentioned any caſe in which the Parſon was wrong. Indeed your information, relative to theſe courts, is highly valuable; how the judge is bound by his oath, &c. and various other matters. You draw the whole in ſuch an amiable point of view, paint in ſuch ſtrong colours their wiſdom, equity, ſummary mode of proceedings, moderation, and, above all, the very ſmall expence attending them! that you almoſt make one wiſh to begin a ſuit in one of them;—if it was only to be convinced how pleaſant they are;—they are certainly the beſt of all poſſible courts. They have been particularly uſeful to you, in furniſhing you with every information you wanted; as well as other things of which you *might* have ſtood in *need*.

After theſe two triumphant inſtances, culled as the choiceſt flowers of the courts, where they were tried; you run on then with a ſtring of concluſions, ending, in the diſcomfiture of all horrid Farmers; and

that

that the whole of the Tithes received by the Clergy from the Farmers of this (as you emphatically ſtyle it) kingdom of graziers! (what a pity that you could not emphatically ſtyle it—kingdom of wheat, oats, and potatoes!) is only an eighth of what they ought, that is, what they wiſh to receive; and that ſo far from being oppreſſors, they are themſelves the *only* oppreſſed ſet of men in his majeſty's dominions; oppreſſed, deſpoiled, almoſt murdered, robbed, "curtailed of their fair proportions," and "have been uniformly ſo," and what's ſtill worſe, with little hopes of "being "otherwiſe;" owing to the vice, atheiſm, and papiſiſm of this truly-abandoned age, where the Clergy are made no more of than any other ſet of men in the community.

For mercy's ſake, my dear THEOPHILUS, out of what farce did you take that rhapſody, about the oppreſſed Clergy! or was it penned ſportingly, and in the gaiety of your heart; for ſure I muſt acquit you of any ill deſign againſt them, or I ſhould take it for irony, conveying a bitter ſatire on the whole reverend body. Explain this in the next edition of your work.

It is now time you ſay (page 15) "to "take a view of the conſtituent parts, "behaviour, and demands of this banditti, "who have riſen up *avowedly*, for the pur-"poſe of rooting out, with fire and ſword, "the eſtabliſhed Clergy of this realm."

Billy O'Driſcoll's letter comes then under conſideration. This letter, you ſay, ſets forth, that they are all "peaſants and all "papiſts:" admitting it to be ſo, is that any reaſon why they ſhould not ſeek for redreſs of grievances; or is it to be imputed unto them as a crime, that they are papiſts and peaſants. You add, "that this "letter, ſigned O'Driſcoll, is a factious "libel, and an inſolent declaration of war "againſt the eſtabliſhed religion of the "country, by a confederacy of armed pa-"piſts." Your remarks on it are of a piece with the premiſes you have laid down; you wreſt the ſenſe of it to ſerve your own purpoſe; and treat the whole of it with the moſt illiberal rancour. Any perſon who peruſes that letter coolly and diſpaſſionately, muſt acquit it of the heavy charges you bring againſt it: it ſeems to me to have been written in the very bitterneſs of diſtreſs; 'tis ſhort, nervous, pathetic, and the pen it was wrote with, though dipt in gall, yet was it plucked from the wing of truth.

The concluſions you draw from it, are in the higheſt degree alarming, and the only thing that is wanting to give *reality* to the fears which you with to raiſe in every Proteſtant breaſt, is, that unluckily for you, your remarks on it are not founded in truth or juſtice. And it is to be lamented, that the ſublime genius, vaſt learning,

learning, deep penetration, and huge abilities of the excellent THEOPHILUS I ſhould be employed to ſtir up the legiſlature againſt a poor, oppreſſed, and almoſt ruined peaſantry; and that an humble letter, addreſſed to a very amiable and worthy character, Silver Oliver, Eſq; wherein they enumerate their grievances, and implored the humane interference of the gentry in their favour, ſhould be conſtrued by you into a factious libel, and inſolent declaration of war againſt the eſtabliſhed religion of the ſtate. It exhibits the melancholy proof of great learning and abilities, proſtituted to flatter the paſſions of a very *powerful* ſet of men. When the ſociety of Jeſus began to fear for its fall; had the good fathers but enliſted one dozen ſuch diſciples as THEOPHILUS, I'll venture to affirm, they would have ſupported their ſinking cauſe; and we ſhould at this day have ſeen them in the full plenitude of their power.

But, in fact, what does this letter ſay; it implores the protection of the Proteſtant Gentry. It tells you that Prieſts have been always artful, uſurping, tenacious of their rights, and that their jarring intereſts have long deluged this devoted iſle with blood: and had the writer added the reſt of Europe to this little iſland, his aſſertion would have been true. Can you ſay it is not true? This deſcription, you ſay, was drawn

drawn up by a Friar: I can't think it: I believe it to be the work of a wicked layman. They then deplore the fate of their unhappy fathers who, "galled beyond "ſufferance, ſtruggled to break their chains, "which ended in their being more ſtrongly "rivetted on them by hands—dipt in their "blood."

Let not theſe ſcenes be brought again in ſad review before us. Come forth ye miniſters of the goſpel of peace; ye followers of him who was humility itſelf; who deſires you, that if your cloak is required of you, to give your coat alſo. Why, if ye are really influenced by the religion ye preach, do you not now with one accord, and with uplifted hands, beſeech the Legiſlature, to relieve your unhappy pariſhioners, offering rather to part with a large portion of your juſt rights, than ſuffer your ears to be continually aſſailed by the cries of diſtreſs; or that the voice of miſery and complaint, ſhould be ſtopt—only by the executioner!

But no; your rights ye claim, and your rights you muſt have; ye bellow forth your wrongs; and the meek and moderate THEOPHILUS, earneſt in their cauſe, claps the trumpet of diviſion and diſtraction to his mouth, and blaſts forth diſeaſes, peſtilence and war!

"All

" All (ſay they) that was left by the " Parſon and Proctor, was gleaned by their " own rapacious prieſts; that nothing might " be loſt.

" At length the clouds of bigotry be- " gan to diſperſe; they looked on it no " longer as blaſphemy, to combat the ex- " actions of their own prieſts; and O'Lea- " ry told them plain as Friar could, that a " God of benevolence would extend his " ſalvation to all ſects. And that the " ſubjects election was the beſt title to " the crown." This was to deſtroy the idea of jure divino.

" Thus (continued they) were we im- " proved in our religion and politics, and " cannot but acquit the legiſlature of for- " mer ſeverity, to people miſled by an ig- " norant and diſaffected Clergy."

Now, in all this, what is there that could call forth the ſeverity of language that you beſtow on it in your remarks. And why, above all things, do you take fire at the declaration, " that the ſubjects election was the beſt title to the crown." If you avow different principles, I hope you will never be able to diſſeminate ſuch Jacobite opinions among our Proteſtant brethren. For as to the papiſts, you ſee they diſavow them; and you accuſe them, in doing ſo, of having committed a crime. But to ſhew that this breathes the true ſpirit of the conſtitution, we need only turn back to

that

that period of our hiſtory where a monarch having broken the *compact* between king and people, was declared by his *ſubjects* unworthy any longer to reign over them, and the two Houſes of Parliament declared the throne to be vacant, and went to a new election. It was not in right of his wife altogether, that they choſe William for their King; but as the defender of their liberties, and the liberties of Europe. And had the Princeſs Mary been married to any other perſon, 'tis more than probable ſhe never would have ſat on the throne of England. And although William and Mary were to reign jointly King and Queen of England; yet the adminiſtration of government was placed in the hands of the King alone. The *people* then, by their repreſentatives, plucked the crown from the head of their prieſt-ridden King, and placed it on the laureled brows of William.

And previous to his coronation, he was obliged to confirm to the repreſentatives of the nation, the *claims* they made in behalf of their conſtituents, to limit the authority of the Crown on every ſide.

Was not this a free choice or election of the people? And can you ſay that that election did not give him a juſt title to the crown. The laſt act of whoſe glorious reign, was ſettling the order of ſucceſſion: and to that ſettlement we owe the happineſs of the preſent family reigning over

us;

us; which, that they may do with honour, glory, and unfading ſplendour, to the lateſt poſterity, is the ſincere wiſh and hearty prayer of two million and a half of people in this truly loyal kingdom.

Other inſtances might have been brought of the people's availing themſelves of the right inherent in them, of changing the very form of their government, when oppreſſed by tyranny.

Were we to turn our eyes on that period of our hiſtory which you emphatically call *accurſed*, we ſhall ſee the rouſed majeſty of the people nobly reſiſt the arbitrary efforts of an obſtinate tyrant, who laboured to bend their free necks beneath the iron yoke of deſpotiſm. Kings of the earth, turn your eyes often to theſe pages of our hiſtory: they will furniſh you with the uſeful leſſon, that the foundations of your thrones ſhould be laid in the hearts and affections of your ſubjects, and that a perſeverance in wrong may make your thrones totter under you, and the imperial diadem looſen on your brows.

If theſe people then, who you ſcoff at for being ignorant, had dropt an opinion that was really cenſurable; in pity to that very ignorance, you ſhould have either overlooked it intirely, or endeavoured by arguments to ſet them right: for you to aſſert, that they mean by that to ſet up a popiſh King, pull down the pillars of the conſti-

tution,

tution, and over-turn the liberties of Europe, is ſo puerile, ſo utterly ridiculous in itſelf, as to be unworthy of a ſerious refutation, and is beſides an impudent libel on the whole body of the Roman Catholics of this kingdom, and will certainly be treated by all who have had the patience to read your dry, long-winded Pamphlet, with the contempt it deſerves. But above all things, what had the poor friar's barbarous ſurname to ſay to the queſtion; or why ſhould you run foul of that? Is it not ſufficient that your godfathers and godmothers gave you a very genteel chriſtian-name, to put before a ſoft and muſical ſurname; but you muſt exult over this poor friar: or ſhall we cloſe in with the opinions of divines and moraliſts, who have obſerved as a bad trait in human nature, that people are prone to cenſure thoſe failings or vices in others, which they themſelves poſſeſs in a ſuperior degree; and conclude from thence, that diſguſted with the vulgarity of your own name, you ſink it under the ſofter one of THEOPHILUS, while you endeavour to hold up the name of O'Leary to ridicule, although you kindly warn him, and all agitating friars, to avoid Saint Sheehy's fate. A bitter taunt, ill applied, and ill-timed, capable of reviving diſſentions now almoſt forgotten, and which we had hoped were trampled under foot in that hell from whence they had at firſt originated.

ated.—Till this Briarius of the church has endeavoured to uncover its dark mouth, and once again to let looſe thoſe accurſed fiends that had ſo long diſtracted this unhappy country. Beware, then, as he warns you, for he crieth with a loud voice, and it is meant to reach the ears of the legiſlature, that the dogs of war may be let looſe at your heels—to hunt you through life.

The next part of O'Driſcoll's letter is ſo very true, that it requires no comment further than juſt to ſtate what it ſays:

"While the Tithe-Farmer enjoys the fruit "of our labour, agriculture muſt decreaſe; "and while the griping Prieſt inſiſts on "more from the bridegroom than he is "worth, population muſt be retarded."

Now what can be more humble, moderate, or dutiful than this? Where is the avowed declaration of war, unleſs their uſing the term decimating leeches can be conſtrued into a deſign of overturning church and ſtate. And where were the keen eyes of the Attorney-General that he could not perceive this declaration of war ſo inſolently avowed? In truth, my dear THEOPHILUS, it exiſted but in your own over-heated imagination, and in the imaginations of thoſe who ceaſed not importuning government, till an army was ſent down to quell the inſurgents. Happily for this kingdom the conduct of that buſineſs was committed to the care of the Right Honourable General who led

the army, independent in principle, and fully ſenſible how much dpended on him. He acted from himſelf alone; neither lending too eaſy an ear to popular clamour, nor ſuffering himſelf to be goaded on to acts of violence by thoſe who were willing rather to have blood ſpilled, than that long eſtabliſhed cuſtoms ſhould be infringed, or the rights of the church violated. But when General Luttrell led this army down in the heart of the country, behold all was peace and tranquillity; and his letters declared, to the reproach of the magiſtrates of that country, that had they exerted themſelves as they ought, they might have quaſhed any diſturbance that had happened.

But not a word was ſaid of rebellion, and the army was marched back again, with their bayonets bright, and the ſoldiers as happy as if they had reddened them in the blood of their countrymen. The whole conduct of the General and his army, gives the lie direct to your ſcandalous inflaming Pamphlet, that diſgraces the cauſe it undertakes to defend.

Your next aſſertion is no better, where you ſay, "That endeavouring to ſubſti-
"tute a modus in lieu of tithes, is only a
"pretence to cover the real deſign of ex-
"tirpating the Proteſtant Clergy, &c.—
"Saul, Saul, too much learning hath made
"thee mad." I appeal to the few Pro-

teſtant

teſtant farmers in this kingdom, if they have not always looked on the annual valuing of their crops by proctors as a grievance, and that they always prefer a modus, and wiſh to eſtabliſh one: and yet will you have the effrontery to aſſert, that becauſe the Proteſtants prefer a modus, that they harbour the barbarous deſign of murdering their clergy.

Your political opinions, indeed, do not claim much reſpect; you certainly never imbibed them at Trin. Col. Dub. where our young men are taught the pureſt principles of liberty, and right notions of government. Your aſſerting that a democracy is worſe than a Popiſh ariſtocracy, would require all your ſophiſtry and knowledge of logic to prove. Indeed you ſeem only to have brought it in to have a fling at the Diſſenters, to whom you juſt ſhew your teeth.

You have thrown up your fool's cap about a century too late—High church for ever, huzza! won't do now.

You ſay true, indeed, that "ſhould the "whole Popiſh peaſantry refuſe to pay "tithes, the body of the Proteſtants ought "to take the alarm;" and no doubt they would. It might well alarm them, were they to be obliged to furniſh the *pittance* that the clergy now get; ſmall as it is, and well as we love them, yet the very idea that

we ſhould pay all, throws me into an ague fit.

You next find fault with ſome weak clergymen, who, to their honour be it ſpoken, conſented to a modus: in truth were all to do ſo, it would be eaſily ſettled. Suppoſe every clergyman aſſembled his pariſh, averaged the crops for ſeven years back, and at that rate ſet every man his tithe for ſeven years to come, and ſo on; nothing I'll venture to ſay could be more eaſily done, nor more readily agreed to.

Next comes your exhibition of the horrid outrages of this nefarious banditti on the perſons and properties of the clergy and their proctors. The recital, you ſay, pains you; therefore to have a thorough and a clear idea of it conveyed every where, and not to lacerate your own feelings, you ſhould get an engraving done by ſome eminent hand, and prefix it to the next edition of your pamphlet; and indeed I wonder how you came not to think of it before; it would be of great advantage, and wonderfully encourage the ſale of your book. And as to the everlaſting repetitions that diſguſt and tire—of maſſacres, murders, &c. collect them all into one paragraph. Thus you might ſay—the rebellious, murdering, plundering, houghing, fleſh-bruſhing, bottle-breaking, pit-ſtuffing, furze-buſhing, ear-cropping, proctor-cutting traitors of the South—which, put all together,

ther, would make a beautiful climax, and be much better than penning them down ſeparately, as you do in every ſecond line of your work.

The back ground of the picture might exhibit a view of this kingdom in one ſcene of blood, rapine, fire and deſolation—which you ſay may be reaſonably enough predicted; that is to ſay, 'tis as reaſonable as any other prediction of THEOPHILUS, who ſeems to enjoy the ſame ſort of intellectual pleaſure, as Croaker in Goldſmith's good-natured man: "Perhaps this moment "we are treading on lighted matches, "blazing brimſtone, and barrels of gun-"powder,—they are preparing to blow us "up into the clouds. Murder! we ſhall "be all burnt in our beds, we ſhall be all "burnt in our beds!"

Of all the writings that appeared in favour of theſe inſurgents, none you ſay caught your attention but thoſe ſigned *O'Leary*; which you read, bad as they were, and full of complaints of grievances that had no exiſtence, and full of the common-place ſtuff of oppreſſion. Common-place indeed, when it is notorious that there is not under the ſun ſo well fed, well cloathed, well treated, happy a peaſantry as our own; who want nothing on earth to be completely comfortable, but a few wooden ſhoes. Theſe writings, you ſay, are ignorant, and turbulent, and inſolent, and humble, and cunning, and dull, and cautious,

cautious, and violent, and calculated to "terrify Parliament into their meaſures." But you well know, if things went to extremities, how ſoon they could be quelled, by government ſending down the flank companies of the army; not indeed under the command of their late general, but under the abſolute direction of Parſon H——. Then would Bellona ſhake her ſpear, and we ſhould read of battles, "bravely, hardly won."

Your ſecond general propoſition—that the abolition of tithes would be only a transfer of property from the Proteſtant clergy to the Popiſh prieſts; becauſe that the prieſts would inſiſt on their people's paying tithes, as being commanded by God himſelf, and conſequently having a maſter-key to the conſciences of all their flock, they would exact that, with rigour from them, which our clergy claim but in moderation; by which in fact the Popiſh farmers would be even worſe than they now are, and conſequently they would be no gainers by the change. Suppoſing that they would be fools enough the moment they got their necks out of one yoke, they would ſtretch them out to be immediately nooſed in another. For my own part, I do not believe a ſyllable of all this, no more than I do what you next aſſert—that it is the horror they have againſt paying tithe to Heretics that they believe will be burned in hell, that

that is the *real* cauſe of theſe inſurrections, and not any grievance in tithes themſelves, much leſs in the mode of collecting them. But it is admitted on all hands, and by all ſects, that tithes are a grievance, and nothing would be of greater benefit to the community than their total abolition: and even ſuppoſing that the papiſts were abſurd enough to believe as you ſay, I think it would be good reaſon that ſome other mode ought to be ſtruck out of providing for the Clergy.

Your third general propoſition goes to prove, that even were Tithes totally aboliſhed, Farmers would not be the better for them, becauſe the Landlords would inſtantly clap on an additional rent, which would be more burdenſome to the tenant than even the Tithe. That the landlords would endeavour to ſqueeze the tenantry, I make no manner of doubt; their ſqueezing ſyſtem is well known; and the cultivated face of the country, and the wealth of the Farmers who live on their lands, ſpeak it plain enough. Their wiſdom and humanity is acknowledged on all hands.

You ſay that to your knowledge, the ſum of three ſhillings per acre, has been exacted and given as a premium for land, tithe free; one fact is worth a dozen arguments, and here it is: can any thing ſerve more clearly to mark the extent of the oppreſſion, than what you have here ſaid? However

However bad as this would be, ſtill it claims a preference to Tithe; for the Farmer would have but one landlord to call on him for rent. He would no longer be plagued and worried with Proctors annually throwing their baleful eyes over his waving fields of corn, and calculating the value of his crops. This is an unpleaſing ſenſation to any man, and ſomething would be paid to get rid of it for ever. He would alſo know to a *certainty*, what he had to pay, and could give a ſcope to his induſtry: being ſure that the tenth of his hard earnings would not be torn from him by rapacious hands, that bore no part of the burden, nor contributed a farthing to the expence, while they were certain of reaping the whole of the profits. Nor did I ever yet know a Farmer, Proteſtant or Catholic, who would not pay cheerfully for the maintenance of the Clergy, provided it was levied in any other manner than everlaſtingly ſtruggling to wreſt from him the tenth of his hard earnings.

You mention an inſtance. One hundred acres of land let at 20s. per acre, would have an additional 3s. added by the Landlord in lieu of tithes; ſo that the tenant would have 15l. a year to pay inſtead of 2l. 10s. which you ſay is *all* that the Tithe, one year with another, amounts to. Now to ſhew how defective your information is, or how great your wiſh to deceive and miſlead your readers, I will ſtate what the

Tithe

Tithe of ſo much land would amount to, by the Proctor's valuation in the pariſh where I live, and of which I can produce proof from their own receipts.

Suppoſe the farm laid out thus:

	Acres.	*Crop valued at.*		*Tithe.*		
			s.	*£.*	*s.*	*d.*
Fallow	20					
Wheat	20	5 bar. per A. at	20	is 5	0	0
Oats	20	8 - ditto -	6	4	8	0
Meadow	20	- ditto -	2 6	2	10	0
Paſture	20	10 ſheep -		0	3	4
Total	100		Total	12	1	4

Now what part of this ſum the Proctors give to the Clergyman, is beſt known to themſelves; I ſhall only obſerve on it, that were all the Tithes rated according to your ſtatements, but few murmurs or complaints would ever be heard.

Was it real ignorance, or was it only a deſire to flatter the great land-owners of this kingdom, that made you ſtate as a matter of fact, what is notoriouſly, and unfortunately for this country, untrue? that the Farmer makes more than two rents; one goes to the landlord, and the reſt to maintain himſelf and family. And here is, ſays you, a peculiar hardſhip on the Clergyman; for you ſuppoſe the 100 acres, though let at 100l. a year, well worth two; out of which the Parſon gets

2l. 10s. whereas, by your rule, he ought to get above 20l. every year. And then you ſet forth the hardſhips of the Clergy, and how they are robbed of their dues, &c. I believe it is a melancholy truth, well atteſted, that ſo far from making two rents, the Farmers of this kingdom can ſcarce make one. If over and above the landlord's rent, grand-jury taxes, hearth-money, miniſters-money, tithe, &c. he can procure a belly-full of potatoes and a little milk, for the food of his family, and a little frize to cloath them—for ſhoes and ſtockings are out of the queſtion—if he does this, he makes all that his moſt ſanguine hopes ever ſtretched to—happy indeed were even this the caſe;—unknown to, and unprotected by his landlord, who has conſigned him to the care of Mr. Fleece'um the Attorney, who is now the agent to the eſtate. To this great man then muſt all his complaints be made, of bad harveſts, unfriendly ſeaſons, mildews, and murrain: but what can he do, he is but an agent. And ſhould he take a long journey, and have the fortune to get acceſs to his lord; *he* would do any thing to relieve him; but has left all to his agent; knows nothing about the matter; has made a reſolution to liſten to no complaint that does not come through Mr. Attorney, his agent; and ſo it ends.

And this man, and when I ſay this man, I include all the common Farmers of this kingdom,

kingdom, whoſe poverty lays them at the feet of their maſters; this then is the man who, with his fellows, was ſingled out by a merciful and wiſe legiſlature, to provide for a luxurious Clergy.

Is it wiſe in the government of a country, poſſeſſed of an extenſive and fruitful ſoil, to ſuffer any weight to be laid on her huſbandmen, that could preſs on, much leſs bend down to the earth, thoſe from whoſe exertions, in a proper ſyſtem of agriculture, the ſtate muſt owe its chief, its real ſtrength? Agriculture and its conſequent attendants, population and plenty, is the vivifying principle, the very ſtamina of all countries that poſſeſs an extent of territory; ſuch a country will be ſtrong, vigorous, and reſpectable, though without a ſingle manufacture. Indeed the forcing of exotic manufactures into our uncultivated country, evinces a degree of wiſdom equal to that man's who ſhould buſily employ his time, in tacking gaudy laces and flimſy gauzes, which beggared him in the purchaſe, on an old thread-bare coarſe coat; the leaſt wind ruffles them, and the ſlighteſt pull tears them from end to end. A few ſplendid buildings may dazzle weak eyes with a falſe ſhew of opulence and wealth; but penetration will pierce through the ſurrounding glare, and darting its keen looks into the interior of your country, will ſee poverty and wretchedneſs ſpread over the face

face of your neglected ſoil, and want and miſery painted in the faces of your ruined peaſantry! Would not your eyes and ears be more gratified in ſeeing countenances overſpread with gratitude and content, and the ſong of cheerfulneſs burſt from every cottage; rather than the meagre, ſlow, heart-broken plowman, who throws a melancholy glance at his half-ſtarved horſes, while he waters the furrow with his tears?

In the feudal times, lands were but of little value, compared with what they are now. But there was no other mode of ſubſiſtence, and therefore a large portion was allotted for the maintenance of the Clergy. And as they were in thoſe days the carvers of every thing, they took their cue from Scripture, and allotted alſo the tenth of the annual produce of the earth for themſelves. It was then their cunning that worked on the ſuperſtition of our bigotted anceſtors, to give them both land and tithe. But though it might then have been the beſt, perhaps the only way of providing for them, it does not follow that it is ſo now. In the reign of Henry VIII. when that tyrant laid his ſacrilegious hands on the treaſures of the church, and ſtript the mitred Abbots of their wealth, much was done to put the Clergy a little on a level with the reſt of the people, from whom before they ſtood aloof. And although in the reformations then begun, much was altered for the better,

ter, yet near three centuries have elapſed ſince; and now another reform is become neceſſary.

The government of every country is competent to alter and new-model every order of its ſubjects; and why ſhould it not regulate the Prieſthood? Tithes are certainly the original ſin with which every acre of land in theſe kingdoms is born and curſed; they have been, and ever will be, the fatal ſource of ill blood between the Rector and his flock; they are the bar that the enemy of mankind has placed to prevent the ſpreading of the Proteſtant Religion in this country; they are particularly grievous to the Farmer, becauſe he pays for the ſupport of a man that perhaps he never ſees; he knows that all the drudgery of the pariſh is done by the Curate for fifty or ſixty pounds a year; and he conceives that a little more added to his income, would make him live comfortably; and that conſequently the many hundreds that are annually drained out of the pariſh, are all thrown away, and ſpent in other countries.

The argument that the Clergy ſhould have ſuch a proviſion as is not liable to decreaſe, &c. is nonſenſe. Why ſhould they not be compelled to accept of a modus, averaged every ſeven or ten years? Is every thing to be ſacrificed to their avarice, even to the convulſing of the ſtate? What landlord ſcruples to let leaſes for thirty-one years;

years; and why ſhould they fear to make leaſes of ſeven? eſpecially why ſhould they be more favoured who do leſs for what they get than any other ſet of men in the ſtate?

You are outrageous againſt the author of a pamphlet, who ſigns himſelf a Beneficed Clergyman, becauſe he recommends a modus in lieu of tithes; and becauſe he calls Tithes a tax, you ſay he is an enemy to the church. What he is, or who he is, I know not, neither did I ever ſee his book; but if you have no better proof that he bears enmity to the church, than what you allege above, I would give but little for your ſagacity. Tithe and Tax are never ſeparated in the idea of any man I ever converſed with, Proteſtant or Papiſt.

Your ſcouting the idea, alſo, of Tithes being a tax on induſtry, and the parallel you draw between a merchant and a farmer, are ſcarce worthy of notice: that a merchant, as his buſineſs increaſes, pays more Taxes is true; and well he may, becauſe he may reimburſe himſelf by fixing a proportionably high duty on his goods. This you allow yourſelf; but it does not acquit you from drawing a compariſon between things that bear not the ſlighteſt reſemblance to each other. The merchant deals in luxuries, the value of which is ever fluctuating; but not ſo the farmer, he deals in a commodity that the pooreſt cannot do without. Merchants may combine,

and

and keep a favourite article up at a high price; but can a combination of farmers take place? Suppoſe half a dozen met on the road, and agreed to aſk 40s. a barrel for their wheat, in Thomas-ſtreet, inſtead of a moderate price, what would be the conſequence?—The mob would riſe and fix a price on their corn, or elſe ſpill it out into the puddle. Combinations may be, and often are, intered into againſt them; but 'tis out of their power ever to combine.

In your 52d page, you promiſe to ſtate the numbers and revenue of the Parochial Clergy: the numbers you give us faſt enough, but the revenues——" haud a "wee, mon!" You ſhot your arrows beyond the mark, or elſe it totally ſlipt your memory. You forgot your cue, when this word inadvertently dropped from your pen. Why did you not draw aſide the murky veil that enveloped this ſubject from the profane eyes of laymen? Could you not have let us known *exactly* what this poor ſcanty pittance is, on which the Clergy endeavour to live? but, as Scrub ſays, "there are ſecrets in all families."

Page 54, Your endeavouring to account for the ſlow progreſs of the Proteſtant religion is laughable enough—that the Biſhops were under the abſolute neceſſity of uniting many pariſhes to provide for one Clergyman: the poverty of each pariſh ſeparately taken, not allowing a ſufficiency for one man to eat; eſpecially as the clergy of that day

day had large ſtomachs, and as ſome of theſe unions are twenty miles long and twenty broad, that is a ſquare of four hundred miles, and one Clergyman *only* appointed to do the duty of that ſmall tract of country!

Now as you ſay, or ſuppoſe, how could one Clergyman ride from one end to the other of this little union, ſay prayers here—chriſten there—bury in a third place—purify the women—pray by the ſick—comfort the afflicted and broken-hearted? he could not be in all parts at once, eſpecially if he was at the ſame time in Bath, or London, or Margate, or Briſtol, or Paris, or even in Kildare-ſtreet. This, to be ſure, was not to be expected; ſo that one goes to church becauſe of *diſſuetude*. Let me by the bye recommend Lexiphanes to your ſerious peruſal; it will relax you after your ſevere ſtudies; it will beſides, help your digeſtion, and prevent your diſgorging any more of theſe hard words. It has been found of admirable ſervice in all pedantic caſes. This by the bye.

In ſhort, the people do not go to church, becauſe there were no prayers, and they cannot be inſtructed, becauſe there is no Clergyman; and ſo they firſt become Heathens, and finally are a prey to thoſe wolves in ſheep's clothing, the Friars and Miſſionaries, who prowl in every country under Heaven, fearleſs of danger, in order

to

to make proſelytes. Now from all this your concluſion is, that were the Tythes all paid, then the number of the clergy would be encreaſed, and the unions melt to the kindly touch of more gold, and each pariſh would then be able to provide for its parſon, and ſo would the Proteſtant Religion flouriſh, and grow up under their foſtering hands; ſo that 'tis we laymen, ſinners as we are, that ſtop the further progreſs of this deſirable work. In one line you ſay, that the pariſhes were united, to give a ſcanty proviſion to one man, and in the next line almoſt, you mention, that all the great benefices of the church are compoſed of theſe unions.

Page 59, You exhort all ſerious chriſtians (that is to ſay, all chriſtians as by law eſtabliſhed) to conſider the great evil that would fall upon the clergy, were a commutation of Tythes allowed, and that it would be gratifying a "Popiſh and rebellious ban-"ditti," and in the long run ſtarve our own Clergy. You ſay, alſo, that "the impiety, "the ſuperſtition, the injuſtice of the times, "have ſo ſtinted the Parochial Clergy, that "a greater number than the preſent can-"not be ſupported in a manner ſuitable "to the dignity of their ſacred function." That the laws have, indeed, provided a fund for their ſupport which would provide for a much greater number, but from different cauſes, and perhaps by a "culpable ſupine-

" neſs in the ſtate, theſe laws are not pro-
" perly enforced."

Page 60. Now ſuppoſing for a moment, that the Tithes were paid up to the utmoſt farthing—how are we aſſured that they would not be divided in the very ſame proportions as they are at preſent? Let us be ſatisfied in this, before you attempt to inſtigate the legiſlature to compel us to pay theſe accurſed Tithes, with the bayonet at our breaſt: for if there is any meaning in words, this muſt be what your ſanguinary mind works to, when you dare to tax the government of your country with a " culpable ſupineneſs," for not dragooning us out of our properties.

Beſides, with what face can you demand more wealth for the Clergy, when you ſay, in the very next page (61), that the *poverty* of the Popiſh Clergy is a " ſpur to their " induſtry, in retaining their preſent congre-
" gations, and making proſelytes." I grant you, the Popiſh Clergy have many ways of raiſing contributions on their flock; but all together not to be compared to the preſent revenue which our Clergy receive: nor do I clearly underſtand what meaning you affix to the words " ſuitable to the " dignity of their ſacred functions." If by dignity you mean wealth and honours, we Proteſtants cannot think that wealth caſts any ſplendor on the ſacred function. A religion founded on the pureſt principles

of

of morality, the foundation of which was in poverty, and which, in every page of the ſacred writings, condemns the acquirement of riches, or the ſeeking after the vain and periſhable things of this life; and expreſsly ſays, that it is difficult, if not impoſſibe, for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. To which of the diſciples did their Lord and Maſter ever ſay, Keep up the dignity of your ſacred functions? on the contrary, he bids them neither to provide purſe nor ſcrip; much leſs did he exhort them to ſeek with avidity for pluralities, or ever deſired them to employ tithe-proctors.

What we imagine beſt ſupports the dignity of the ſacred function, and what throws a glory round it, is the piety, humility, charity, and ſanctity of manners of that clergyman, who thoroughly believes in, and is conſequently influenced by, the principles of that pure religion which he endeavours to propagate and impreſs both by precept and example, on all who are happy enough to be acquainted with ſuch a character.

You talk much of farmers defrauding the clergy, and you are liberal enough in your abuſe, calling them rogues and knaves, and glance even at their wealth. I believe the tillage farmers through the kingdom, taken in general, are very poor,

have lands at rack rents, and are a hard-working ſet of harmleſs honeſt men; and their occupation I believe leſs ſubject to diſhoneſt dealings than any other.

The reſt of your pamphlet abounds with diſguſting and tireſome repetitions of rebellious mobs, extirpations, maſſacring of clergymen, and everlaſting horrors of a modus, leſt in a thouſand years hence their incomes may be leſſened, they conſequently ſtarved, and religion at an end. Croker in every page!

Then you are employed in buffeting a pamphleteer, for whom you expreſs utter contempt; while at the ſame time your ingenuity is exhauſted in endeavouring to refute his arguments.

With what modeſty do you then propoſe your land ſcheme: not indeed as the beſt, but which you exhort with tears in your eyes the reverend body to accept of; though you confeſs it is "robbing them of "their all;" but yet, conſidering the vice and immorality of this age, and what a *ſmall* ſhare of influence they poſſeſs, and leſt they ſhould loſe all, they are beſeeched to accept the poor proviſion that the twentieth part of the beſt land in every pariſh will be able, by a little induſtry, to afford them: a "poor proviſion 'tis true, but yet ſufficient juſt to keep them above want." Though you lament, indeed, that this will

will *illaqueate*, that is intrap them into farming, which, you juſtly conſider, muſt be a grievance to men, who hoped always to ſpend their lives in idleneſs. But fear not, reverend ſirs; this ſore evil is not ſo near you. The great projector of the ſcheme forgot one thing: but I'll firſt let you ſee what the miſerable pittance would come to, and then I'll tell THEOPHILUS, what it was he forgot.—The number of acres in this little iſland amounts to eleven million forty-two thouſand ſix hundred and forty-two; the twentieth part of which is 552,132, or thereabouts. Now this trifle of land, divided amongſt the parochial clergy, whoſe numbers are 1000, will leave every man 553 acres of good ground; for good it muſt be, or the ſons of the prophets will not meddle with it. Behold a ſnug parſonage houſe, ſtanding in the midſt of a little glebe of 553 acres, at no rent, no tithe: what a poor proviſion for a man, and eſpecially for a clergyman! Now in the name of goodneſs, THEOPHILUS, what are we to ſuppoſe the *preſent revenues* of the clergy to amount to, when you tell us, that 'twould be "abſolutely robbing "and plundering them" to offer ſo paltry an equivalent for their tithes, as 552,132 acres of land, rent free! however the outline was certainly grand. What influence would not the poſſeſſing of ſo much land

land give to the biſhops at all elections, and what a vaſt territory would the church then have in poſſeſſion, when added to the lands of the biſhops,* deans, and chapters, &c. that conſtitute already no inconſiderable ſhare of the kingdom! And I dare affirm, that when you pretended to whine forth the hardſhips of the clergy, were they to accept of this plan inſtead of tithes, your riſible muſcles, if you have any, were all in play. I declare I was at firſt caught with this ſcheme, and was turning it in my thoughts, till I came to conſider—where is that land? oh, the parliament will purchaſe it, and then, no doubt the biſhops will make an equitable diviſion of it, and a very impartial one. The purchaſe then of 552,132 acres of good land, at twenty years, and at a pound an acre, would amount to the ſum of 11,042640l. To raiſe which ſum, a tax of ——, but this I'll leave to financiers. The intereſt, at five per cent. on the ſum, ſuppoſing the money was borrowed from a few of our rich Aldermen, now in high favour, would amount to the ſum of 552,157l. per annum. Now 'tis evident the nation could be no great gainer by this, and you ſay the Clergy would be loſers by it: ſo I believe we may let it drop. I ſhall only mention what

* The revenues of the Biſhops, 73,400l.

what I believe you forgot, which was, that this land, being private property, was to be purchaſed, and the money for that to be raiſed on the people. So the land ſcheme of the great THEOPHILUS muſt end here!

Page 95. Your next aſſertion, that ſome particular events and circumſtances, have at this time cauſed the fire of theſe diſcontents, hitherto ſmothered, to break out into a blaze. The firſt and principal of theſe are, " the *haſty* and *improvident* repeal of " the moſt important parts of that code of " laws, called Popery-laws; and particular- " ly of that part of them which forbid the " acquiſition of freehold property by pa- " piſts." In order to have a right idea of the cruel code, which the wiſdom and humanity of that Parliament repealed, I will juſt put down the heads of thoſe laws, calculated for the meridian of deſpotiſm; and the unprejudiced will allow them to be the moſt tyrannic, oppreſſive, bigoted, as well as abſurd ſyſtem of laws that ever diſgraced any country. And the repealing of the moſt obnoxious of them, was not haſty or improvident, but the reſult of wiſdom and political ſagacity. It will convey the memory of that Parliament with honour to a grateful poſterity, whoſe ears the ſlanderous tongue of THEOPHILUS can never reach! who attempts to libel the govern-

ment

ment of his country, for not keeping the ſword ſuſpended by a thread over the heads of two millions of people; or for not carrying into bloody execution thoſe laws, that would have ended in the extermination of the whole people. 'Twas enough that they anſwered the views, in ſome meaſure, of the humane framers of them; it broke down effectually the ſpirit of the native Iriſh. It baniſhed, unhappily for theſe kingdoms, a ſet of valuable men, whoſe wiſdom has directed foreign councils, and whoſe valour has led their troops to conqueſt and renown: while narrow politics, afraid to truſt men who differed from us on ſome matters of faith, hired mercenary generals to lead our armies, at enormous expences, and overlooked the gallantry of our own baniſhed countrymen. Would you alſo object to their wealthy merchants acquiring freehold property! Would you rather that the wealth which induſtry extracts from commerce, ſhould lie idle in foreign funds, than that it ſhould be laid out in purchaſes of land at home! Can you look upon a merchant ſo ſituated, as a good ſubject, becauſe he looks upon himſelf as an alien from the boſom of his country; as a man unworthy of a ſettlement in the land of his anceſtors? Or do you look upon that man, with his money all laid out in purchaſes here, as a *bad* ſubject,

ject, because he has now a real interest in it? Away with such illiberal notions! it was folly to conceive them ever, but, in our enlightened days, it would be insanity to maintain them, and tyranny to carry them into effect.

By the Laws of Discovery, as they are called:

1. The whole body of Roman Catholics are absolutely disarmed.

2. They are incapaciated from purchasing land.

3. The entails of their estates are broken, and they gavel among the children.

4. If one child abjures that religion, he inherits the whole estate, though he is the youngest.

5. If the son abjures the religion, the father has no power over his estate, but becomes a pensioner on it in favour of such son.

6. No Catholic can take a lease for more than thirty-one years.

7. If the rent of any Catholic is less than two-thirds of the full improved value, whoever discovers takes the benefit of the lease.

8. Priests who celebrate mass to be transported, and if they return to be hanged.

9. A Catholic having a horſe in his poſſeſſion, above the value of five pounds, to forfeit the ſame to the diſcoverer.

10. By a conſtruction of Lord Hardwicke's, they are incapacitated from lending money on mortgage.

The preceding catalogue, though imperfect, is however an exhibition of oppreſſion fully ſufficient.*

No government, I'll be bold to ſay, ought to adopt the illiberal ſpirit of religious party; but, opening its wide arms, ſhould embrace and equally protect all who acknowledge a God,—that great Being, who is himſelf of no ſect, but the univerſal and benevolent Father of all who call upon his name.

Your aſſertion, that the Volunteer Aſſociations were alſo cauſes of the preſent inſurrections, is as ill ſupported and as illiberal as moſt of your other aſſertions. By your own confeſſion, there were inſurrections in this kingdom twenty years ago, when no Volunteer Aſſociation was even thought of.

And had not the Catholics boſoms caught part of that divine flame, that like lightning flaſhed from one end to the other of this kingdom, the clouds of bigotry, ſuperſtition,

* The above is extracted from Mr. Young's Tour through Ireland, Dubl. Edit. p. 44.

ſtition, and ſlavery, that ſo long ſpread a gloom over our fertile plains, had not been diſpelled.

The irradiations of that glorious flame, made Proteſtant and Catholic ſee at once their true intereſts; and ſpurning the narrow prejudices that had ſo long unhappily divided them, ruſhed into each other's arms with brotherly affection. Thus firmly united together, and arrayed in military pomp, the gleam of their arms threw a luſtre over this country, that it never knew before. It caught the eyes of Europe: aſtoniſhed at the novel ſpectacle, of an army of citizens ſelf-created, aſſembled for the honourable cauſe of defending their native ſoil from foreign invaſion, when the troops of the ſtate were abroad, ſtraining every nerve to ſupport a tottering empire. The groans of near three millions of people, for almoſt a a century, made but a ſlight impreſſion on the government of a country, whoſe politics were, that the people of this country were only to be hewers of wood, and drawers of water. But the ſudden blaze of forty thouſand firelocks, brought that government at once to a more humane manner of acting; and I believe it is well known, that what little advantages this kingdom now reaps, is entirely owing to the loyalty and inflexible patriotiſm of that truly reſpectable body of men, the Volunteers of Ireland.

And do you ſay that the Catholics who filled up the ranks of that ſurpriſing army who lent a ſtrong hand to emancipate their country, ſhould have had their firelocks wreſted from them, becauſe they fell under the vile letter of an illiberal law; and that for their firſt *offence* they ſhould be fined fifty pounds, and impriſoned one year; and on a ſecond "conviction, to un-"dergo the penalties of a premunire, the "ſevereſt penalties, next to death, inflict-"by our laws:" which laws againſt Papiſts carrying arms, you ſay that, they are indebted to government for not enforcing: nor did any one perſon but yourſelf ever think, that the reſpectable corps called the Iriſh Brigade, meant to inſult their brother Volunteers, by aſſuming that name. You might as well ſay, that becauſe his Majeſty has ſome regiments called Royal, that therefore the reſt of the army are meant to be inſulted.

Your efforts, THEOPHILUS, will be found of little uſe; and too weak to looſen that band, which, I truſt, has for ever bound together the good people of this kingdom.

Your attack, when your hand was in, on your old friend, the "unquiet pragmatical Hely," though a little foreign to the general matter of your pamphlet, may be paſſed over; as it was a gratification to you, and was ſent forth at little expence,

like

like thoſe who, having long advertiſements to put into the papers at other people's coſt, clap in at the end—N. B. Lodgings to let.

From your 102d to your 109th page, which happily cloſes your ſublime work, you ſcarce give yourſelf or reader time to take breath; ſuch a whirl of ideas ſeized you, that ſure your head was giddy when you went to pen them down. Croker, poor Croker, "his ſituation deſerves the utmoſt "pitty—I ſhall ſcarce recover my ſpirits "theſe three days." What murders on the clergy, ready to be committed—the people in rebellion—the Tithes going to change hands once more—the Clergy to be exterminated—laws demanded to be repealed at the point of the ſword—cropt Proctors, riding bare-backed horſes at full-gallop—the common people ready to pull down their ſuperiors—patriots inflaming their paſſions, and making themſelves heads of parties, to procure power and riches—Papiſts daring to complain of grievances; *avowing* the deſign of murdering all the Clergy—(that is to ſay) abridging their Tythes; which is, in other words, to annihilate them; and rooting out the Proteſtant religion;—eſtabliſhing Popery—riſe in their demands, when they find the government too weak to reſiſt them—excite our *agitating* Patriots to demand a Popiſh monarch, perhaps of Sardinia, or one of

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And do you ſay that the Catholics who filled up the ranks of that ſurpriſing army who lent a ſtrong hand to emancipate their country, ſhould have had their firelocks wreſted from them, becauſe they fell under the vile letter of an illiberal law; and that for their firſt *offence* they ſhould be fined fifty pounds, and impriſoned one year; and on a ſecond "conviction, to undergo the penalties of a premunire, the "ſevereſt penalties, next to death, inflict-"by our laws:" which laws againſt Papiſts carrying arms, you ſay that, they are indebted to government for not enforcing: nor did any one perſon but yourſelf ever think, that the reſpectable corps called the Iriſh Brigade, meant to inſult their brother Volunteers, by aſſuming that name. You might as well ſay, that becauſe his Majeſty has ſome regiments called Royal, that therefore the reſt of the army are meant to be inſulted.

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like

like thoſe who, having long advertiſements to put into the papers at other people's coſt, clap in at the end—N. B. Lodgings to let.

From your 102d to your 109th page, which happily cloſes your ſublime work, you ſcarce give yourſelf or reader time to take breath; ſuch a whirl of ideas ſeized you, that ſure your head was giddy when you went to pen them down. Croker, poor Croker, "his ſituation deſerves the utmoſt "pitty—I ſhall ſcarce recover my ſpirits "theſe three days." What murders on the clergy, ready to be committed—the people in rebellion—the Tithes going to change hands once more—the Clergy to be exterminated—laws demanded to be repealed at the point of the ſword—cropt Proctors, riding bare-backed horſes at full-gallop—the common people ready to pull down their ſuperiors—patriots inflaming their paſſions, and making themſelves heads of parties, to procure power and riches—Papiſts daring to complain of grievances; *avowing* the deſign of murdering all the Clergy—(that is to ſay) abridging their Tythes; which is, in other words, to annihilate them; and rooting out the Proteſtant religion;—eſtabliſhing Popery—riſe in their demands, when they find the government too weak to reſiſt them—excite our *agitating* Patriots to demand a Popiſh monarch, perhaps of Sardinia, or one of

the branches of the Bourbon! But then you ſee the Engliſh—"undebauched by "Popiſh incendiaries, and their helliſh doc-"trine of depoſition and murder"—coming to ſupport the rights of his preſent Majeſty and his family, in a kingdom where theſe rights are univerſally acknowledged; and then a civil war, and ſuch a war,—and the old ſtory of the ambitious and faithleſs French. Pray, THEOPHILUS, was it decent to talk thus of a nation which the government of England thought it proper to enter into bonds of amity with. But this by the bye, as it is nothing to us. Then theſe inſidious, faithleſs Popiſh rebels, will be puniſhed, or Great-Britain deſtroyed, as well as the Proteſtant religion;—not forgetting the liberties of Europe. You add then, "I will not heſitate, therefore, (there "are few things, indeed, you would heſi-"tate at) to pronounce, that any man, "who ſhall attempt to ſupport, abet, or "countenance the pretenſions of the pre-"ſent inſurgents, is an enemy to the Bri-"tiſh empire—to our glorious conſtitution "—to the reformed religion in general; "but particularly to the religion eſtabliſh-"ed in this kingdom—and a *traitor* to his "Sovereign."

What, if "in defiance to this ſtern de-"cree" this terrifying menace, I venture to tell you, that the moſt loyal Proteſtants

of

of this truly loyal kingdom, wiſh as fervently for an abolition, or modification of Tithes, as any papiſt in the land: nor can the name of Traitor to his King and country be better applied, than to him who preſumes to drag the ſacred name of Majeſty into a diſpute about Tithes; endeavouring, thereby, to vilify, in the eyes of the beſt of Sovereigns, the good intentions of his moſt loyal and dutiful ſubjects; and caſting a ſtigma on your country, by a falſe repreſentation of her being in open and avowed rebellion; becauſe a few miſcreants, who could eaſily have been ſuppreſſed, have cut off the ears of a few raſcally Proctors; and, to the ſhame of the magiſtracy of that country, where theſe vile practices were committed, proceeded to other acts of violence, by which, 'tis ſaid, two or three Tithe-Farmers loſt their lives. But where the *rights* of the Church were ever called in queſtion, her Champions would overturn empires rather than have a profane finger laid upon the ſmalleſt of them; and though it may be impolitic to appear odious to any ſet of men, and particularly to the Clergy, yet it would be culpable, and a criminality againſt the ſtate, to gratify their unreaſonable paſſions at the expence of one's underſtanding; therefore, I have delivered my ſentiments with freedom, fearleſs of any ſet of men. For my own part, I have

the

the honour and happineſs of living on terms of intimacy and friendſhip with ſome of the worthieſt Clergymen in this kingdom, whoſe learning and piety do honour to their profeſſion; and I have heard them over and over lament, that ſome other mode was not ſtruck out for their maintenance, and that they would be content with leſs than they even now get, to be paid them cheerfully; and, as I ſaid before, it would really advance, inſtead of annihilating the Proteſtant religion, to have Tithes for ever aboliſhed.

I ſhall now, with the greateſt reſpect to the Clergy and farmers, beg leave to lay before them, a ſcheme for the honourable ſupport and maintenance of the Clergy. I ſhould ſay, indeed, 'tis rather an outline than a finiſhed plan. I am well aware of the many objections that will lie againſt it from the great dignitaries of the church; but I ſincerely believe, that all the moderate Clergy will be at my ſide; and yet, I have no great hopes that it will ſucceed; ſo much will pride, ambition, avarice, and a luſt of power ſtand in its way, that, unfriended and unſupported, except by the weak hands of a few reaſonable beings, I dread its falling at the very firſt effort it makes to pierce through ſuch a formidable phalanx of foes. No plan, it is true, can be without ſome inconvenience: both the old and the new, will neceſſarily

partake

partake of the imperfections of all human inſtitutions. But this ſhould not diſcourage from making the attempt of mending at leaſt a plan, that the lapſe of centuries has ſhewn to have created many evils; and that repeated complaints from all ſides, have ſufficiently ſhewn that its foundations were never laid in the ſpirit of wiſdom, however the contrary may be maintained by the great THEOPHILUS.

Innovations, it is true, on long eſtabliſhed cuſtoms, ſhould not be lightly ſet forth, nor raſhly undertaken. But this reaſoning muſt be cautiouſly attended to, becauſe it might be turned as a ſtanding piece of artillery againſt every improvement. Had our anceſtors argued in this manner, we ſhould never have acquired either liberty or property, but groaned for ever under Norman tyranny!

But I truſt there is no occaſion to enlarge further on a ſubject that muſt be allowed on all hands. Therefore, I ſhall mention the advantages that would ariſe to all parties, were my ſcheme, or one in any reſpect ſimilar, to take effect.

A very elegant author mentions in a pamphlet, which he wrote in the year 1782, and which was addreſſed to the Gentlemen of our Univerſity, that there are about fifty-two young gentlemen who every year are ready for ordination; but that from the

preſent ſituation of affairs, nearly half of theſe muſt be left without proviſion. For the number of Clergy being twelve hundred; of theſe, by the common calculation of lives,* thirty-ſix may be ſuppoſed to die every year; conſequently the number ready for ordination being fifty-two, one-third will, of neceſſity, be unprovided for. And of theſe thirty-ſix vacancies, many are filled up by ſtrangers, who were never in the College of Dublin. So that the aſſertion holds true, that nearly one-half who are ready for ordination, muſt be left without proviſion; while Engliſhmen are introduced to the beſt eccleſiaſtical preferments among us, "a numerous aſſemblage of men, who "not being able in England to ſatisfy their "ambition, are perpetually crowding to "this kingdom, in the train of every Vice-"roy. And when they have been raiſed "themſelves, uſe all the intereſt and "weight they have acquired, for the bene-"fit of others of their countrymen, whom "they encourage to come over." †

This evil I have endeavoured to obviate alſo. But to treat of each in its order. Let us ſuppoſe all Tithes annihilated; then no

* The computation is, that in every hundred men from the age of twenty-three, to extreme old age, three will die every year.

† See the Pamphlet.

no Clergyman whatſoever to ſucceed to a living in Ireland, unleſs he was educated and ordained in Trinity College, Dublin. Next, all the Biſhopricks and Archbiſhopricks to be equalized.

That conſequently no tranſlations of Biſhops, from one ſee to another ſhould ever take place. That a conſtant ſucceſſion ſhould invariably take place. So that a young man entering the church is ſure, if he lives, of a comfortable and genteel proviſion, and a certainty of ſucceeding to the higheſt dignities; as nothing can prevent him, but ſcandalous morals or a vicious courſe of life. The Biſhops to have, as at preſent, their ſeats in the great council of the nation; but no voice, except on affairs that concerned the church. Thus emancipating them at once from the ſerviſe drudgery of ſupporting the meaſures of every Secretary, on every queſtion that he wiſhes to have carried through the Houſe. And, inſtead of lifting up their voices on every paltry matter that is called a government queſtion, or haunting the levies of the great, I would wiſh to ſee each man in his dioceſs, the revered and honoured father of his flock, living in primitive ſimplicity, the bleſſing of all around him.

And as the ſalaries of the Clergy ſhould be paid every half year, by the collectors of each county, without the ſmalleſt deduc-

tion being made for fees or other extortions of office; 'tis evident that no pluralities could exiſt. Alſo, that a fund be eſtabliſhed for the ſure maintenance of the widows of Clergymen.

I thought alſo, that every pariſh ought to have one Clergyman, and that one obliged to reſide in his pariſh. Alſo, that in every pariſh, a church ſhould be built, that has not one already. And alſo, in the midſt of a glebe, near the church, a neat parſonage-houſe ſhould be erected. The money for theſe purpoſes, and for to eſtabliſh the fund for the widows, to be paid out of the value of all the church lands, and impropriate Tithes, which ſhould, for that purpoſe, be ſold without reſerve. Thoſe who hold Biſhops lands, to have leaſes for ever made them, on paying the proper value. And that no one now ſhould be injured, or have cauſe to complain, every beneficed Clergyman, Biſhops, &c. to receive, while they live, the amount of their preſent incomes.

We will then ſuppoſe the Clergy divided into four Claſſes, not reckoning the great Dignitaries of the Church, as follows:

Primate

			£.	s.	d.		£.		Acres.		
Primate - - -		at	5,000	0	0	is	5,000	glebe	500		
The three other Archbiſhops -	-	-	4,000	0	0	-	12,000	do.	400	each	
18 Biſhops -	-	-	2,000	0	0	-	36,000	do.	300	do.	
18 Deans - -	-	-	800	0	0	-	14,400	do.	200	do.	
1ſt Claſs Clergy -	200	-	500	0	0	-	100,000	do.	150	do.	
2d ditto - -	200	-	300	0	0	-	60,000	do.	100	do.	
3d ditto - -	500	-	200	0	0	-	100,000	do.	50	do.	
4th ditto - -	1393	-	64	5	11¼	-	90,266	do.	30	do.	
Total, excluſive of the Biſhops and Deans	2293						416,666				

Now

Now of the 11,042,640 of acres in this kingdom, I'll ſuppoſe but 10,000,000 taxable; then an equal land-tax laid on this number of acres, will produce about tenpence on every acre, to raiſe the ſum of 416,666l. all to a fraction. And if this ſum may be ſuppoſed more than what this kingdom could well bear, it might be divided ſo between landlord and tenant, that each would have but a triffe to pay. Now if we may ſuppoſe that the Biſhops will not agree to this, nor ſuffer their lands to be taken from them; though, as I obſerved before, the government of every country is fully competent to alter all theſe matters as it pleaſes. Yet ſuppoſe the Biſhops were even to remain as they are at preſent, ſtill the Tithes may be ſtruck off, and their equivalent, according to this mode, be given, by a general tax on all the lands indiſcriminately.

And ſure in this ſcheme, which I have the honour of laying before the Public, it cannot be objected, that an honourable ſupport and maintenance is not here offered to the Clergy, in lieu of the *ſcanty pittance* which they now receive; and that no one can object to it as not holding out advantages enough to encourage gentlemen to enter into holy orders; in fact, can the law, phyſic, or the army, ſhew any proſpect ſo advantageous? which of them ever

can

can hope, almoſt inſtantly, to have a decent maintenance; in a very few years, an eligible eſtabliſhment; and their advanced age, to be pillowed by from 2 to 5000 pounds a year, beſides the high dignity of a mitre, or ſitting in peace in the archiepiſcopal throne.

And the objection that we have not enough of labourers in the vineyard of the Lord, and the conſequent evils, lamented ſo feelingly by THEOPHILUS, is here removed in a great meaſure; for by the increaſe of the number of Clergy, from 1200 to 2293, ſufficient proviſion will be made for the numbers, who are ready every year for ordination; for to fill up the vacancies that muſt happen annually in ſuch a number, it will demand a ſupply of 69. As I ſuppoſe no foreign Eccleſiaſtic obtruded upon them, but every Clergyman to riſe by ſeniority, till he fills the higheſt dignity of the church.

The great objection to this mode of providing for the Clergy by land-tax, will hold good with THEOPHILUS ſtill; namely, that in the courſe of time, by the decreaſe in the value of money, the Clergy may come to want; can only be obviated by a compariſon of every twenty years, and then encreaſing the tax to keep it ſtill to its preſent value.

I ſhould

I ſhould conceive what is here offered, a very ample proviſion; and then having a reſident Clergy, decent edifices riſing in all parts of the kingdom, would ornament the country, as well as humanize people accuſtomed to ſee nothing but cabins of mud. And thus the reſidence of one gentleman of learning and ideas, in each pariſh, living on his glebe, could ſcarcely fail of introducing improvements in agriculture and planting, to the real and permanent advantage of this kingdom.

In this ſcheme a regular order of ſucceſſion is ſuppoſed; that is, that the oldeſt Biſhop ſucceeds to the Primacy; the oldeſt Dean to the Biſhoprick; the oldeſt of the firſt claſs to the Dean; and ſo on. And I ſuppoſe alſo, that all dirty ſmall dues ſhall for ever ceaſe: for if the ſalaries here mentioned are allowed ſufficient for the clergy, or let what other mode there will be adopted, theſe petty grievances ſhould be ſwept away likewiſe; ſo that all chriſtenings, marriages, burials, purifyings, &c. &c. ſhall be done without the ſmalleſt expence to any individual; and no church-yards ſuffered in towns to be receptacles for the dead; but large cemeteries, provided convenient to, but not in any town whatſoever; and the dead may be carried there and depoſited in their long home, without paying any fees on admiſſion: the houſe of the dead is ſad enough,

enough, without having it ſubject to a tax. If, in what I have mentioned about a maintenance for the clergy, I have not offered a ſufficiency in lieu of what they now poſſeſs, it is owing to ignorance of what the real value of their livings are. This information THEOPHILUS promiſed us, but forgot: only this much I will ſay, that, be their revenues what they may, too much cannot be given them to drop all claims for ever to tithes. Let them be provided for in the moſt liberal manner; let us meet them as friends, and not view them in the odious light of Tax-gatherers, derogatory to their ſacred functions, and grating to our own feelings. The Roman Catholics of this kingdom, ſays THEOPHILUS, pay all the tithes. This is hard. They ſupport our clergy, and they are preyed on alſo by their own. If the legiſlature of a country conſiders its protection as due equally to the ſeveral orders of its ſubjects, would it not be liberal in that government to ſtand forward, and, by openly profeſſing the generous idea, try if ſome ſyſtem could not be deviſed that would relieve the Catholic from the intolerable exaction of his Prieſt? That a clamour would be raiſed about our ears by our clergy, for giving a countenance to that religion, I make no doubt of, and a violent one too: but I think a moment's reflection would ſhew them, that the ſcheme I ſhall mention would do more to let the Proteſtant

Religion ſpread, than any ſcheme that has ever yet been deviſed; and for this reaſon: The great hold that the prieſt held over the affections of his flock formerly, was the idea that he impreſſed them with, that every time he celebrated maſs, it was at the peril of his life; but that for their ſakes he would yield up that life rather than leave them without the benefits of the holy church; that he was conſequently without ſupport and entirely dependent on their charity for every precarious meal he eat: arguments that ever had, and ever will have weight, while human nature continues formed of its preſent materials.

But were the Prieſts provided for by a proper eſtabliſhment, theſe arguments could be urged no longer.

The next great check which the Prieſts have over their congregations, and which keeps them effectually from diminiſhing, is confeſſions. This brings in the largeſt and moſt certain revenue to them; and conſequently they never miſs one of their pariſhioners from confeſſion, which happens twice a year, but they eagerly enquire into the cauſe: their bread depends on it; therefore are they ſure to be diligent; and place every bar before their flock, leſt they ſhould creep into the proteſtant fold. Let us ſee what revenue this alone brings them in:—two million of people; ſay one million five hundred thouſand come twice a year

year to confeſſion, at one Britiſh ſhilling each; for the other five hundred thouſand we leave out, as not being arrived at twelve years of age, which is the period at which they generally go to confeſs, eſpecially the young ladies.

Now had the Romiſh prieſts a decent proviſion, which ſhould be paid them by Proteſtant as well as Papiſt, they would not have the aſtoniſhing anxiety about the decreaſe of their flock which they now have; and in that caſe, I think, the gentle whiſtle of our Proteſtant ſhepherds might entice away numbers of the Catholic ſheep: whereas in the preſent ſtate of affairs, they cannot convert ſcarce one a year. To be ſure it may ſeem very deſirable that there ſhould be but one religion profeſſed in a ſtate; yet I believe it might be proved, that it would not ultimately benefit that ſtate. It is oppoſition and contraſt, that ſharpen the wits of men. And there might be danger, were all the different ſects ſwallowed up in one, that a languor might ſucceed that would exclude a variety of diſquiſitions, that exerciſe and animate the talents of mankind. It might encourage the prieſts to a relaxation of their ſtudies, morals and activity, and ſerve to introduce a lazy, ignorant, and vicious Clergy.

I ſhall bring into one view how much money is actually paid by the Papiſts to the knowledge of every one almoſt, whoever for an inſtant conſidered the matter.

One million and a half of people, paying a Britiſh ſhilling each, at confeſſion twice a year, is one hundred and ſixty-two thouſand five hundred pounds.

Suppoſe a million of ſhillings laid down on the altar at Chriſtmas, is fifty-four thouſand one hundred and ſixty-ſix pounds thirteen ſhillings and four pence.

Confeſſions	£ 162,500	0	0
Altar-money	54,166	14	4
Total	216,666	13	4

To ſay nothing of chriſtenings, burials, where every one of the relations of the deceaſed muſt pay one ſhilling; at leaſt every head of a family muſt. And if the deceaſed happened to be in any decent circumſtances, the Prieſts and Mendicant Friars flock like birds of prey, and lay heavy contributions on the ſuperſtitions of the people.

Can we then ſay it is too much to rate chriſtenings, marriages, and deaths, at 5d. to each perſon annually? that is twenty thouſand eight hundred and thirty-three pounds ſix ſhillings and eight pence. To ſay nothing of preſents that the wealthy make, of malt, oats, hay, bacon, &c. &c. Well may Mr. O'Driſcoll ſay, that what little our Clergy leave, is carefully gleaned up by their own, to the abſolute impoveriſhment of the people.

The whole ſum then makes 237,500l. or a capitation of 2s. 4¼d. on every individual of two millions of people, over and above all taxes whatſoever.

Now the ſcheme I would ſubmit to your inſpection, would not amount to near this enormous ſum; would be more acceptable to the Romiſh Clergy; I believe, at leaſt, it would to the bulk of the people, which is the thing to be conſidered.

		£.	£.
To one Archbiſhop and Metropolitan	}	700	700 per ann.
To the three other Archbiſhops	}	500	1500
To eighteen Biſhops		300	5400
To 1146 Prieſts at		60	68790
To 1146 Coadjutors at		25	28662
2292		Total	105052

How many Prieſts and Mendicants there really are; I know not; but I believe more than is here mentioned. A land-tax of 2¼d. per acre would raiſe this ſum; many are the good effects that would follow, were ſome plan of this kind adopted. And if a college was founded, and all that were to have pariſhes here, to be ordained by their own Biſhops, it would keep at home thoſe poor wretches, who go begging in the colleges abroad, and imbibe wrong notions

tions inimical to liberty, and vile prejudices for ever cling to their minds: keep them at home. By granting their Biſhops alſo comfortable maintenances, they would become independent of the court of Rome, which now keeps them in the moſt ſlaviſh ſervitude. A few years would work miracles; no jarring intereſts could ever raiſe diſtractions in the minds of either Clergy: the bitterneſs of controverſy, in a great meaſure, would ceaſe; and while they venerated and loved the government that protected, ſo would they dread the weight of its hand. I would alſo be underſtood here: this ſupport for their Clergy ſhould be abſolutely in full for all confeſſions, burials, chriſtenings, marriages, &c. Any Prieſt convicted of taking money or preſent for the performance of any one of theſe duties, to be puniſhed by his Biſhop; and ſhould he neglect to interfere, then by applying to the neareſt Juſtice of the Peace, who ſhould give a check, ſigned by the Popiſh Biſhop, to the Collector of the county, to ſtop a quarter's ſalary; the money to be diſtributed to the poor.

Though ſixty pounds may appear but a poor proviſion for a man, and twenty-five a worſe one; yet when it is conſidered that theſe people are of low extraction, and, beſides, are ever to remain ſingle men, and alſo, that they will ultimately ſucceed to the Biſhopricks, it will, I think, not be found

found too ſmall a proviſion; however, it might be on a more enlarged plan. Friars and Mendicants, thoſe cormorants, I would allow of none.

At every twenty years, when our Clergy were weighing the value of the money, for fear of its decreaſe, theſe men's ſhould be proportioned in the ſame manner; and alſo be paid half yearly by the collector of the county.

Now theſe Plans I offer to the conſideration of the Public, not from a conviction that they will be ever carried into effect; but, as ſomething muſt be done, theſe thoughts of mine, however viſionary, may yet ſerve to ſtimulate more able heads to bring forward ſomething that may happily pleaſe all parties. A ſincere wiſh for this, and a deſire, in ſome meaſure to ſtop the ill opinion which THEOPHILUS endeavoured to inſpire the breaſts of people with againſt the poor Farmers of this kingdom; and to reſcue them from calumny, and, if poſſible, from oppreſſion, made me, though doubtful of the event, try my maiden ſword againſt the veteran THEOPHILUS; to whom I once more addreſs myſelf. Your writings, moſt excellent THEOPHILUS, whenever, in the fulneſs of time, you chuſe to avow your real name, and lay by this, that you have ſo modeſtly adopted; which, if I miſtake not, implies lover or friend of God; or, according to your own way of defining things,

things, lover of, or friend to the Church, that is to ſay, of the Clergy, will inſure you thanks from your grateful country; from the Roman Catholics, whom you repreſent as deſigning to put up a popiſh king, and as being in actual rebellion; from the Diſſenters, whom you dragged in by the head and ſhoulders; from the Proteſtants, whom you wanted to incenſe againſt their Catholic brethren; from the Volunteers, whom you meanly ſlandered; and from the Government, which you attempted to libel, whoſe moderation you found fault with, and whoſe vengeance you endeavoured to excite, againſt a peaceful, unoffending, loyal people; from the Farmers, whom you abuſe with virulence. In the name, then, of that ſet of men, who will hold you in everlaſting remembrance, I beg leave to ſubſcribe myſelf, moſt excellent, merciful, and moderate THEOPHILUS!

Your obliged,
humble ſervant,
A FARMER.

THE END.